



## Press Release

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### Smokers are smoking less

*Fewer heavy smokers while light smokers on the rise, but even occasional smoking can cause harm*

Fewer American adults are smoking cigarettes, according to a new [Vital Signs](#) report from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Also, daily smokers are smoking fewer cigarettes each day, it says.

The report, which covers data from 2005 to 2010, shows an estimated 19.3 percent—or 45.3 million—of American adults, aged 18 and older, continue to smoke, a decline from 20.9 percent in 2005. Of those adults who smoke, 78.2 percent (35.4 million) smoke every day.

The percent of U.S. adult daily smokers who smoke nine or fewer cigarettes per day rose to 21.8 percent in 2010, up from 16.4 percent in 2005. The percent who smoke 30 or more cigarettes per day fell from 12.7 percent to 8.3 percent during the same period.

“Any decline in the number of people who smoke and the number of cigarettes consumed is a step in the right direction. However, tobacco use remains a significant health burden for the people of United States,” said [CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.](#) “States with the strongest tobacco control programs have the greatest success at reducing smoking.

“You don’t have to be a heavy smoker or a long-time smoker to get a smoking-related disease or have a heart attack or asthma attack,” said Dr. Frieden. “The sooner you quit smoking, the sooner your body can begin to heal.”

Although data from CDC’s National Health Interview Survey show fewer American adults are smoking, the rate of the decline between 2005 and 2010 is slower than in the previous five-year period.

“This slowing trend shows the need for intensified efforts to reduce cigarette smoking among adults,” said [Tim McAfee, M.D., M.P.H.](#), director of the CDC Office on Smoking and Health. “We know what works: higher tobacco prices, hard-hitting media campaigns, graphic health warnings on cigarette packs, and 100 percent smoke-free policies, with easily accessible help for those who want to quit. These approaches are proven to decrease smoking and reduce the health burden and economic impact of tobacco-related diseases in the United States.”

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Tobacco use and exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke kill an estimated 443,000 Americans each year. For every one smoking-related death, another 20 people live with a smoking-related disease.

In addition to the loss of human life, smoking costs about \$193 billion annually in direct health care expenses and lost productivity. Tobacco control programs that have been proven to reduce smoking also have been proven to reduce the health care costs directly related to tobacco use.



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Smokers can get free resources and help quitting by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or visiting [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov).

[\*Vital Signs\*](#) is a CDC report that appears on the first Tuesday of the month as part of the CDC journal [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, or MMWR](#). The report provides the latest data and information on key health indicators. These are cancer prevention, obesity, tobacco use, motor vehicle passenger safety, prescription drug overdose, HIV/AIDS, alcohol use, health care-associated infections, cardiovascular health, teen pregnancy, asthma, and food safety.

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